undertaken as an experiment on parcel traffic by East Coast Railway and it has been observed that the earnings on parcel traffic from the month of July 2005 to October 2005 have increased by 5.21% in comparison to the corresponding months of last year.

(e) The subject will be reviewed in the normal course after gaining sufficient experience.

Launching of more Luxury Trains

1175. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to launch more luxury trains like "Palace on Wheels" in certain States to boost tourism to improve the economy of the respective regions;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that the historical heritage of Orissa is one of the most sought after religious hubs in the world, i.e. Lord Jagannath Temple in Puri and around 500 other spectacular temples and Maths in the State;

(d) whether Government also propose to run such a train to improve the economy of this backward State; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (e) A Memorandum of Understanding has been executed between the Indian Railways and the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC) for introducing a luxury tourist train in the Karnataka sector. Presently, there is no other proposal for launching such trains in other States.

Extension of Nizamuddin-Orissa Hirakud Express

1176. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he had in the recent railway budget for the year 2005-06 announced that Nizamuddin-Orissa Hirakud Express would be extended up to Vizag; and

(b) if so, by when it is likely to become operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir .

(b) During the current financial year.

Vigilant Monitoring System during heavy rains

1177. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the midst of heavy rains and over-flooding of rivulets near culverts and railway bridges, there is any vigilant monitoring system through co-ordination of railway engineers and the concerned State's mandal-wise engineers and revenue authorities, to fore-see the dangers of railway track in advance;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of various measures already in force to send messages to the engine driver to stop or slow down, when there is a danger to the railway track during the normal times and during the period of heavy rains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) There are certain works carried out in the states like Irrigation Tanks and Water Reservoirs, Canals in embankments Marginal Bunds etc. which affect the safety of railway tracks and bridges. Such works are called 'Railway Affecting Works'. It was therefore found necessary that Railway authorities are kept informed of the broad details and maintenance and upkeep of these works by the authorities concerned so that steps to ensure safety of track etc., if necessary, could be taken in time. The attention of the Chief Ministers of States was drawn to the above during conference of chief Ministers with the Railway Minister in 5th June, 1957. It was decided to have State Committee of Engineers in each State consisting of officials from the Public Works Deptt., Irrigation, Revenue, Forest etc. of the States concerned and the Railways. The State Committee of Engineers identify the Railway Affecting Works in the State and also address various coordination issues. Government also had appointed a Committee of Engineers in 1967 under the Chairmanship of Dr. A.N. Khosla to study the various aspects related to the safety of Railway tracks and bridges with respect to floods. As a follow up of the recommendations of the Khosla Committee, accepted by the government, rules and procedures to be followed for the construction, maintenance, inspection and operation of 'Railway Affecting Works have bee laid down in the Manual of Instructions